

IN THE CLAIMS

This is a complete and current listing of the claims, marked with status identifiers in parentheses. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A bottom seal (9)—at the lower end of a step screen (1)—provided with a grating (3)—and adapted to convey solid particles and objects positioned in flowing water—(2), the grating comprising alternately fixed and movable lamellar rods (4, 5)—with intermediate gaps (6)—to allow the water to pass through the grating and with steps (8) at their longitudinal edges (7)—upstream, the movable lamellar rods (5)—being movable in a closed motion path (2)—in their plane with an upwards component (C)—which is greater than the height of the steps—(D), for step by step conveyance of the solid particles and the objects from the water and along the fixed lamellar rods (4)—to an outlet, the bottom seal (9) extending substantially across the entire width of the grating to seal the ducts (10)—that arise between the fixed lamellar rods at their lowermost step (8)—as the movable lamellar rods move upwards between the fixed lamellar rods,—

~~characterised in that, —~~

the bottom seal (9) ~~comprises~~comprising:

—at least one elongate bottom cover—(11), ~~which~~ connected at ~~its~~ a longitudinal edge (12)—upstream ~~is connected~~ to the step screen—(1) and guided at ~~its~~ a longitudinal edge (16) ~~downstream~~downstream ~~on the one hand is guided~~ on guides (17) on the lowermost steps (8)—of the movable lamellar rods (5) ~~in order~~ to follow the motion ~~thereof~~ the rods and, ~~on the other hand,~~ in this the motion, is being pivotable up and down (E)

close to and past the edges ~~(7)~~—upstream on the lowermost steps ~~(8)~~—of the fixed lamellar rods ~~(4)~~.

2. (Currently Amended) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 1, wherein

~~in which~~ the bottom cover, ~~(11)~~—to be pivotal, is at least partly made of a flexible material.

3. (Currently Amended) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 1, wherein

~~in which~~ the bottom cover ~~(11)~~—is pivotally connected to the step screen ~~(1)~~—via a bottom step ~~(13)~~, which extends substantially across the entire width of the grating ~~(3)~~ upstream of the bottom cover.

4. (Currently Amended) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 3, wherein

~~in which~~ the bottom cover ~~(11)~~—is pivotally connected to the bottom step ~~(13)~~ ~~by means~~via ~~of~~ at least one hinge ~~(15)~~.

5. (Currently Amended) A bottom seal as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims,~~

~~in which~~ claim 1, wherein the guides ~~(17)~~—on the lowermost steps ~~(8)~~—of the movable lamellar rods ~~(5)~~—project from the same upstream towards the bottom cover ~~(11)~~—and guide the bottom cover from below.

6. (Currently Amended) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 5, wherein

~~in which~~ the longitudinal edge ~~(16)~~—of the bottom cover ~~(11)~~—downstream abuts slidingly against the guides ~~(17)~~—of the movable lamellar rods ~~(5)~~.

7. (Currently Amended) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 5 ~~or 6~~, wherein

~~in which~~ the guides ~~(17)~~ of the movable lamellar rods ~~(5)~~ are substantially rectilinear.

8. (Currently Amended) A bottom seal as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims,~~

~~in which~~ claim 1, wherein ~~the edges (7) upstream on the lowermost steps (8) of the fixed lamellar rods (4) are curved with a radius, (F) which is only slightly greater than the pivoting radius (G) of the bottom cover, (11) and which has the radius having substantially the same centre (7) center as the pivoting radius of the bottom cover~~ ~~latter~~ to form a small, but substantially tight motion gap ~~(20)~~ between the edges of the fixed lamellar rods upstream and the longitudinal edge ~~(16)~~ of the bottom cover downstream.

9. (Currently Amended) A bottom seal as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims,~~

~~in which~~ claim 1, wherein the bottom cover, ~~(11)~~ to ensure its guiding on the guides ~~(17)~~ of the movable lamellar rods ~~(5)~~ during the motion thereof, is yieldably loaded towards the guides.

10. (Currently Amended) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 9, wherein

~~in which~~ the yieldable load is provided by at least one spring means, ~~preferably at least one tension spring (19) fixed between the bottom step (13) and the bottom cover (11).~~

11. (New) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 9, wherein the yieldable load is provided by at least one tension spring fixed between the bottom step and the bottom cover.

12. (New) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 2, wherein the guides on the lowermost steps of the movable lamellar rods project from the same upstream towards the bottom cover and guide the bottom cover from below.

13. (New) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 3, wherein the guides on the lowermost steps of the movable lamellar rods project from the same upstream towards the bottom cover and guide the bottom cover from below.

14. (New) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 4, wherein the guides on the lowermost steps of the movable lamellar rods project from the same upstream towards the bottom cover and guide the bottom cover from below.

15. (New) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 6, wherein the guides of the movable lamellar rods are substantially rectilinear.

16. (New) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 2, wherein the edges upstream on the lowermost steps of the fixed lamellar rods are curved with a radius, only slightly greater than the pivoting radius of the bottom cover, the radius having substantially the same center as the pivoting radius of the bottom cover to form a small, but substantially tight motion gap between the edges of the fixed lamellar rods upstream and the longitudinal edge of the bottom cover downstream.

17. (New) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 2, wherein the bottom cover, to ensure its guiding on the guides

of the movable lamellar rods during the motion thereof, is yieldably loaded towards the guides.

18. (New) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 3, wherein the edges upstream on the lowermost steps of the fixed lamellar rods are curved with a radius, only slightly greater than the pivoting radius of the bottom cover, the radius having substantially the same center as the pivoting radius of the bottom cover to form a small, but substantially tight motion gap between the edges of the fixed lamellar rods upstream and the longitudinal edge of the bottom cover downstream.

19. (New) A bottom seal as claimed in claim 3, wherein the bottom cover, to ensure its guiding on the guides of the movable lamellar rods during the motion thereof, is yieldably loaded towards the guides.